

REMARKS

Pending claims

Through this Amendment, Claim 3 has been canceled; claims 1, 4-6, 9, 11, 34, and 36 have been amended to more clearly point out and distinctly claim the invention; and new claims 37-44 have been added. After these amendments are entered, thirty three (33) claims (claims 1-2, 4-24, 34, and 36) are pending.

Specification

The Abstract of the disclosure has been amended to overcome the Examiner's objection.

Claim Rejection under 35 USC §103

Claims 1-2, 12-16, 34, and 36 were rejected by the examiner under 35 U.S.C §103 (a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,016,562 to *Madan et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,920,917 to *Nakatani et al.* and U.S. Patent No. 5,695,564 to *Imahashi*. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

The rejection over claims 1-2 and 12-16 has been overcome by the amendments of claim 1. Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 3 which was allowable but objected by the Examiner as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Claims 34 and 36 have been amended to incorporate limitations related to an entry hold chamber in communication with a source of plasma gas. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references, alone or in combination, do not disclose nor suggest anything about an entry hold chamber in communication with a source of plasma gas.

In sum, Applicants submit that the invention as currently claimed is patentable over the cited references. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the claim rejection set forth in the Office Action.

Claim Objection

Examiner indicated that Claims 3-11 would be allowable over the prior art if amended to include all limitations of base claims and intervening claims. Claim 3 has been canceled and its limitations have been incorporated in its base claim. Claims 4-5 have been amended to be dependent upon claim 1. Claims 6, 9, and 11 have been rewritten in

independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As such, this claim objection has been overcome by the claim amendments.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing and in conclusion, Applicants submit that all of the pending claims are now in conditions for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that a discussion with Applicants' representative would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned. Please address all correspondence to Robert Gorman, CIBA Vision, Patent Department, 11460 Johns Creek Parkway, Duluth, GA 30097. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any other fees which may be required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 and 1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-2965.

Respectfully submitted,



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